

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 16, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 184

Introduced by Assembly Members ~~Block~~ and *Member Ruskin*

August 4, 2010

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 184—Relative to the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 184, as amended, ~~Block~~ *Ruskin*. Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education.

This measure would ~~extend the existence of~~ *express* the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education *Education's recommendation that its existence be extended* into the 2011–12 Regular Session, ~~and authorize the joint committee to act until November 30, 2012, at which time its existence would terminate~~ *to continue the work it has accomplished thus far*.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The review by the Joint Committee on the Master
2 Plan for Higher Education marks the 50th anniversary of the Master
3 Plan for Higher Education in California (Master Plan); and
4 WHEREAS, The joint committee convened in large measure
5 because of the widespread concern that our state's system of public
6 higher education is now at risk; and
7 WHEREAS, The Master Plan was, and remains, a
8 comprehensive policy framework. Upon its advent and in the
9 decades following, it signaled an unparalleled commitment to
10 higher education, of unrivaled size and scale. Through planned

1 and coordinated growth, it mandated the pioneering principles of
2 universal opportunity and universal access; and

3 WHEREAS, In our estimation, nothing has been more
4 responsible over the past several decades for the quality of life in
5 California and for California's economic prosperity than our system
6 of higher education; and

7 WHEREAS, During the comprehensive hearings of the joint
8 committee, there have been no experts to argue that California's
9 economy and social fabric can now benefit from a contraction of
10 either educational opportunities or educated people. Indeed, the
11 systematic review of higher education, with broad public and
12 stakeholder testimony, confirms that California's future depends
13 on an even more effectively educated people. Private investment
14 and growth are dependent upon an ever expanding number of
15 women and men ably prepared to contribute and compete in the
16 global marketplace, adding value through their superior knowledge,
17 imagination, and skill; and

18 WHEREAS, In light of this challenge, the joint committee has
19 reaffirmed the essential tenets of the Master Plan: universal access,
20 affordability, and high quality; and

21 WHEREAS, However, the joint committee also believes that
22 the Master Plan must be regarded as a living document. In many
23 ways, California has been transformed since the inception of the
24 Master Plan. Therefore, in order for our state and people to meet
25 the challenges of the 21st century, we will need the vision and
26 courage to ensure our system of higher education adapts when and
27 as necessary to meet the needs of the society that sustains it and
28 the demands of the new century; and

29 WHEREAS, The hearings of the joint committee have
30 demonstrated that, after five decades of success, our system of
31 higher education is now threatened. The system will not continue
32 to be effective automatically. It requires our renewed attention,
33 commitment, and support; and

34 WHEREAS, After objective and close scrutiny, the joint
35 committee has presented an agenda of needs accurately describing
36 what our people and state require from our system of higher
37 education to ensure California's success in the coming decades;
38 and

39 WHEREAS, The State of California has no articulated,
40 comprehensive statement of goals for California's system of higher

1 education. The Master Plan articulates values but not a set of public
2 policy goals based upon the outcomes required to meet the needs
3 of our state and our people. The lack of these goals makes it
4 difficult to develop sound systems of criteria for advancement or
5 clear systems of accountability; and

6 WHEREAS, Statewide goals, including the workforce needs of
7 the state, are essential for the effective functioning of our system
8 of public higher education, complemented by the work of private
9 colleges and universities; and

10 WHEREAS, In order for California to compete in the global
11 marketplace, replace the baby boomer generation, and ensure a
12 cohesive and democratic multicultural society, our state must
13 continue to support the unique genius of California's original 1960
14 Master Plan, namely its commitment to universal access for every
15 qualified student. This access provided our state and people the
16 distinction that enabled California to become the world leader in
17 higher education; and

18 WHEREAS, Given the economic needs of our state and the
19 labor-market needs of our economy, universal access gives us the
20 greatest possibility of meeting those long-term needs. In addition,
21 in a state as diverse as California, the maintenance of this promise
22 gives hope to all Californians who wish to attain a higher education.
23 This hope is essential to our success and cohesion as a people; and

24 WHEREAS, Affordability must be established within a clearly
25 articulated and agreed upon framework of shared cost, between
26 the student who benefits directly from a quality education and the
27 public, for whom the student's education is an investment for the
28 public good. As a practical matter in the real world, the absence
29 of affordability makes the achievement of universal access an
30 impossible dream; and

31 WHEREAS, Our state must recognize the limited financial
32 capacity of many of our eligible students and that the nature of our
33 response makes their matriculation feasible; and

34 WHEREAS, The state needs to consider the entirety of the costs
35 accruing to students and their families with regard to participating
36 in higher education, the manner in which we recognize and balance
37 the individual private and the overall social benefits of higher
38 education, and the extent to which we are willing to subject our
39 students to a future burdened by large loan debt; and

1 WHEREAS, California should adopt clear metrics for measuring
2 whether our goals are achieved by our financial aid policies. In
3 designing those financial aid policies, we should evaluate the use
4 of incentives that can help us reach our desired outcomes; and

5 WHEREAS, The pledge of California's original Master Plan
6 included, along with universal access and affordability, the
7 assurance of quality; and

8 WHEREAS, Quality will be required in order for California to
9 provide a higher education that will serve to keep California
10 competitive in our global economy, especially because of the
11 tripling now by both our global competitors, India and the People's
12 Republic of China, of the annual number of doctoral degrees in
13 science and technology above those produced by the entire United
14 States; and

15 WHEREAS, In this regard, it is essential that the dimension of
16 "quality" be examined and articulated, especially according to the
17 definition of quality as "those capacities and skills that are essential
18 for preparing Californians to live and work constructively in this
19 21st century"; and

20 WHEREAS, Although the dimension of preparation for higher
21 education and workforce development is primarily the
22 responsibility of the state's K-12 schools, their well-being and
23 success are interdependent with our system of higher education,
24 both in what higher education demands in the way of preparation
25 by the state's systems of K-12 education, and because our system
26 of higher education prepares almost all of the educators who will
27 operate our systems of K-12 education; and

28 WHEREAS, It is essential that our system of higher education
29 pay explicit attention to its roles and responsibilities as an effective
30 partner in adequate preparation of students for admission to, and
31 success in, higher education and in the effective preparation of
32 teachers for our systems of K-12 education; and

33 WHEREAS, In addition, more could be done to bring
34 California's concurrent enrollment policy closer to fulfilling its
35 potential as an important tool in meeting the state's educational
36 challenges. Existing concurrent enrollment efforts are tightly
37 focused on college-level and advanced-education opportunities;
38 however, California policies could be altered to promote even
39 greater participation for those who are able to take college-level
40 classes. California would benefit from the creation of more robust

1 local partnerships between high schools and the California
2 Community College system in order to allow and encourage
3 career-technical education opportunities, better shared use of
4 vocational equipment and resources, coursework in basic skills
5 and remediation, high school exit exam preparation, programs
6 targeted at dropout intervention and prevention, instruction in
7 English as a second language, and other opportunities designed to
8 meet the needs of local communities; and

9 WHEREAS, The partnership between K-12 education and higher
10 education should include advancement of rigorous career technical
11 education – especially in both K-12 systems and community
12 colleges, so that students who do not choose to seek a four-year
13 degree may yet gain the benefits of productive careers, helping
14 eliminate the stigma too often attached to those not seeking a
15 four-year degree or graduate study; and

16 WHEREAS, The needs of the new millennium will require a
17 unified career technical education and workforce development
18 system. Moving forward, it is critical that entities such as
19 government, business, labor, community-based organizations, and
20 other education and workforce stakeholders come together to
21 develop a comprehensive approach; and

22 WHEREAS, With respect to effective articulation, coordination,
23 and efficiency, and our state's need for coordination and efficiency
24 in our delivery of higher education with sufficient authority placed
25 in a coordinating body, the people and State of California do not
26 have unlimited resources to fund our system of higher education.
27 Hence it is essential that we have some designated agency with
28 the role, responsibility, and capacity for advising the Legislature
29 and the Governor, the segments of higher education, and the
30 California public with regard to essential coordination and needed
31 efficiency in our delivery of higher education; and

32 WHEREAS, The original Master Plan expected that our three
33 public segments of California's higher education would operate
34 as a system, with prescribed differentiation of functions, yet all
35 collaborating to facilitate and ensure the steady progress of each
36 and every student from preparation through accessibility onto
37 completion; and

38 WHEREAS, The people and State of California do not have the
39 luxury of wasting resources and time in an unnecessarily complex
40 system of articulation among our segments of higher education.

1 Our state needs instead for all stakeholders in our respective
2 segments to come together and adopt an agreed-upon, clear, and
3 effective system of articulation, including a transfer associate
4 degree, and this student-centered approach will help students move
5 more quickly toward their goals; and

6 WHEREAS, With respect to accountability, both fiscal and
7 programmatic, the establishment of statewide goals for California
8 higher education attuned to the public interest of the people and
9 State of California will enable increased accountability across the
10 entire system and within segments. This increased accountability,
11 with increased efficiencies, must be both fiscal and programmatic;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, It is no longer sufficient for our primary focus to
14 be upon getting our students into our system of higher education.
15 Our systems must lead our students systematically and readily to
16 complete their courses of study in a timely manner. Best estimates
17 show that, by 2025, unless we improve our outcomes, we will fall
18 over one million postsecondary degrees short of the number needed
19 for a robust economy in a global marketplace; and

20 WHEREAS, With respect to our state's need for simultaneous
21 commitment to quality higher education, to maintain California's
22 distinction and our capacity to keep California competitive in our
23 now globalized economy, our system must be accountable for
24 results without sacrificing quality; and

25 WHEREAS, With respect to our state's need to close the
26 achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students
27 and communities, our need for an educated populace capable of
28 filling the necessary jobs to maintain a globally competitive
29 economy requires education of disadvantaged communities
30 traditionally underserved. The system must be accountable for
31 closing the achievement gap in ways that do not require or allow
32 restricting access to disadvantaged communities; and

33 WHEREAS, With respect to our state's need for utilizing
34 technology to meet our fiscal and programmatic challenges, as
35 new technologies arise, we must be flexible and open to new
36 methods of higher education delivery and to the use of data systems
37 that both provide information about outcomes and create efficiency
38 in operations; and

39 WHEREAS, Transparency must be increased as part of an
40 accountability system focused on meeting statewide goals. It will

1 help us to find the optimum balance between administrative costs,
2 teaching costs, and other expenses; and

3 WHEREAS, With respect to sufficient financing, the test of our
4 goals, aspirations, commitment and of our capacity to ensure the
5 future well-being of the people and State of California is to be
6 found in the arena of funding, and whether and how we in the
7 California Legislature, together with the Governor and the people
8 of California, prove willing and able to provide the funding
9 essential to our meeting the needs of the California system of
10 higher education; and

11 WHEREAS, With our state's need to establish and articulate
12 the nexus between public investment and public benefit, California
13 needs a sound financing mechanism aligned with statewide goals
14 to ensure that our state's needs are met. In determining the
15 respective funding commitments, a clear nexus must be established
16 between public financing and the economic benefits to the state,
17 so that both the level of public investment and the return on that
18 investment are articulated and verifiable; and

19 WHEREAS, With respect to our state's need for the support of
20 the people of California for the joint committee's public agenda
21 of needs for California higher education, it is essential, as the joint
22 committee files its report with findings and recommendations with
23 respect to the future of California higher education, and does its
24 very best to shepherd its recommendations into enactment and
25 successful implementation, that the importance of a comprehensive
26 strategic action plan for enlisting the active and ardent commitment
27 and support of the people of California be recognized. Toward that
28 end, the joint committee's agenda of needs for higher education
29 must clearly articulate the correlation between public investment
30 and public benefit; ~~and now, therefore, be it~~

31 ~~WHEREAS, The Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher~~
32 ~~Education recommends that its existence be extended into the~~
33 ~~2011-12 Regular Session, until November 30, 2012, to continue~~
34 ~~the work it has accomplished thus far; now, therefore, be it~~

35 ~~Resolved, by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate~~
36 ~~thereof concurring, That the Joint Committee on the Master Plan~~
37 ~~for Higher Education is continued in existence and authorized to~~
38 ~~act until November 30, 2012, at which time the committee's~~
39 ~~existence shall terminate; and be it further~~

1 ~~Resolved, That the joint committee shall submit a report on its~~
2 ~~activities to the Legislature during the 2011–12 Regular Session;~~
3 ~~and be it further~~

4 *RESOLVED, BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF*
5 *CALIFORNIA, THE SENATE THEREOF CONCURRING, That*
6 *the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education*
7 *recommends that its existence be extended into the 2011–12*
8 *Regular Session, until November 30, 2012, to continue the work*
9 *it has accomplished thus far; and be it further*

10 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
11 *of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.*